

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In response to Office Action mailed February 26, 2008, Applicant amends his application and requests continued examination. In this Amendment, claims 6, 8, 10, 16, 18, and 22-26 are cancelled leaving claims 1-5, 7, 9, 11-15, 17, and 19-21 pending.

Request for Personal Interview

Applicant requests that a personal interview be granted to his representative, pursuant to MPEP 706.07(b), before first examination. The purpose of the interview is to discuss the prior art and its application in the final rejection, and the amended claims and their distinction from the prior art. Contact information appears at page 10.

This Amendment

Claim 1 is amended by incorporating several of the limitations of claim 4, limitations that also appeared in claims 6, 8, 10, 16, 18, 22, and 23. The remaining claims have been amended as to dependencies, as necessary, but, otherwise, are essentially not amended. The amended claims are fully supported by the application as filed. The amendments are supported, for example, generically, in the passage of the patent application as filed from page 14, line 18 through page 15, line 2 and the description of the exemplary embodiment of Figure 5 from page 19, line 5, through page 21, line 1.

Amended claim 1 makes clear that the door includes a frame and a cover, exemplified in the cross-sectional view of the exemplary embodiment of Figure 5 by the frame 31 and the cover 52. As can be seen in that Figure, the rubber buffer is located between the liquid crystal display unit 51 and the frame 31, in contact with both the liquid crystal display unit and the frame, providing desired spacing and

vibration-reducing mounting of the liquid crystal display unit 51 with respect to the door of the gaming machine.

The Office Action

In the Office Action mailed February 26, 2008, all twenty-six claims were rejected as unpatentable over Cole (U.S. Patent 6,475,087) in view of Suzuki et al. (U.S. Patent 6,227,968). Applicants respectfully request the Examiner take appropriate steps to correct the identification of Suzuki in the Office Action and to make that patent of record in the prosecution of this patent application. The latter step requires the preparation of a PTO-892 form identifying Suzuki with the correct number and the inclusion of that PTO-892 form in the next communication. Applicant thanks the Examiner for identifying the correct patent number of Suzuki, which did not appear in the Office Action mailed February 26, 2008. The rejection of all claims, particularly of the claims as presented here, as obvious over Cole in view of Suzuki is respectfully traversed.

Response to Prior Art Rejections

Applicant agrees that Cole is pertinent prior art. Cole describes a gaming machine that, in one of the described embodiments, includes a liquid crystal display 190. That liquid crystal display is supported by a support 74 as shown in Figure 5 of Cole. However, perhaps the most pertinent single figure in Cole is Figure 3 which shows, in a cross-sectional view, a gaming machine having a hinged door 34 with a window 66. That gaming machine includes reels that provide a display, rather than a liquid crystal display. The reels or liquid crystal display are observed through the window 66 and, potentially, a panel 68 that is transparent. That panel is held in place by the support 74 which apparently engages a bracket 75.

The Examiner acknowledged that no rubber buffer as described in the examined claims exists in Cole.

Reliance was placed upon Suzuki as allegedly describing a rubber buffer that could be used in modifying the door of the Cole gaming apparatus, thereby establishing *prima facie* obviousness as to all pending claims. With respect, Applicant submits that, based upon the disclosure of Suzuki and the alleged basis of the modification appearing in the Office Action, the assertion is not logical.

Suzuki uses the word “buffer” only once, in column 17, line 17. Suzuki appears to be nominally within the field of the present invention because it concerns a gaming machine, namely some kind of odd dance game apparatus. As best understood, in playing the game, a person dances on a platform that includes numerous switches that detect the pressure applied by the feet of the game player. Based upon the opening and closing of the switches, it can be determined whether the game player is maintaining proper rhythm and location of his feet to coordinate with the music being supplied by the gaming machine.

Most importantly, the buffers described in Suzuki have nothing to do with the mounting and supporting of a liquid crystal display unit. To be sure, the Suzuki gaming apparatus includes some kind of a display illustrated, for example, in Figure 2 of Suzuki and for which a supporting arrangement is illustrated in Figure 3 of Suzuki. However, the “buffer” described in column 17 of Suzuki relates to the switches in the floor of the Suzuki gaming apparatus that are actuated by the feet of the dancing game player. See, for example, Figure 5 of Suzuki illustrating such a switch and the description of that figure in Suzuki in columns 5 and 6.

The use of a resilient member, such as the protruding piece 230a, in the switch of Suzuki has not the slightest connection to the present invention. The present invention concerns providing a cushioned and vibration-reducing mounting arrangement for a liquid crystal display unit in a gaming machine. In other words, the Examiner has failed to demonstrate any motivation for extracting from the pressure actuated switch of Suzuki a resilient element and inserting that resilient element in the liquid crystal display panel mounting structure described by Cole.

In order to explain how one of skill in the art would borrow a non-existent rubber buffer from Suzuki and insert that buffer into Cole, it was asserted in the Office Action, that the resulting “advantage would be creating rhythm sensations by using the entire body and by performing stepping according to the contents which are instructing in sequence and to provide a step-on base which is suitably used for the game.” Office Action at page 3. This assertion makes no sense since the claimed invention has nothing to do with rhythm sensations by a person’s body nor stepping. To the extent what is stated can even be understood, it appears simply to be a pretext for making a rejection because the assertion lacks any factual connection between Suzuki and the subject matter of the invention claimed.

There is no doubt that Cole describes a structure that is relevant to the invention as claimed. It is likewise apparent that nothing in Suzuki is relevant to any mounting arrangement for the display 31 of Suzuki. For both of the foregoing reasons, considered independently, the rejection of the claims as formerly examined should be withdrawn.

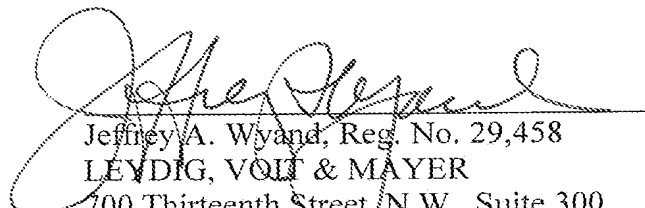
The amended claims make still clearer the subject matter of the invention and define the invention more precisely. The cushioning arrangement provided by the rubber buffer is made clearer in the independent claim by describing its location between and contact with the liquid crystal display unit and the frame. In rejecting similar limitations of previous claims, for example, claim 4, reference was made to Figure 4 of Cole. However, it is apparent the Examiner intended to refer to Figure 5 of Cole because the reference to liquid crystal display element 190 cannot have been intended to refer to Figure 4 of Cole. Only Figure 5 of Cole shows that liquid crystal display and element 74 which the Examiner asserted could be compared to the buffer of claim 1. The comparison was and is erroneous.

The support 74 of Cole corresponds, at best, to the frame of the claims because it is not a rubber buffer but a simple mechanical support, as shown in Figure 3 of Cole. The support 74 is, presumably, a metal element. The latter conclusion follows from the fastening arrangement illustrated in Figure 3 of Cole.

To the extent there is any basis for the comparison between elements of the claims and of Cole that was made in the rejection, that basis is no longer available in view of the amended claims submitted here. In the invention, the frame is at the rear of the liquid crystal display unit as is the support 74 of Cole. That support 74 is not rubber and is not a rubber buffer. Therefore, it is apparent that in order to meet the limitations of the claims, the Examiner is asserting that the support 74 in Cole meets the rubber buffer and the frame of claim 1, two totally distinct limitations within claim 1 and in former examined claims. Using a single element of the prior art to meet two distinct and different elements of a claimed invention, different elements that perform different functions, is improper examination procedure and cannot support the rejection made, either as to the examined claims or the claims now pending.

For each of the foregoing reasons, reconsideration of the rejections made with respect to the examined claims is requested. Further, because the claims now presented, like the claims formerly examined, distinguish from the prior art, upon that reconsideration, all claims now pending should be allowed

Respectfully submitted,



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